U.S. Department of Education 2011 - Blue Ribbon Schools Program

A Public School

School Type (Public Schools):	~			
(Check all that apply, if any)	Charter	Title 1	Magnet	Choice
Name of Principal: <u>Dr. Charles</u>	Watson			
Official School Name: Quest A	<u>cademy</u>			
· ·	650 Stricklar aleigh, NC 2	nd Road Suite 27615-2082	<u>175</u>	
County: Wake County S	tate School (Code Number:	<u>92N000</u>	
Telephone: (919) 841-0441 E Fax: (919) 841-0443 W		tson@questcha www.questcha	_	
I have reviewed the information - Eligibility Certification), and c	• •		~	ity requirements on page 2 (Part I Il information is accurate.
				Date
(Principal's Signature)				
Name of Superintendent*: <u>Dr. C</u>	Charles Wats	on Superinte	ndent e-mail:	cwatson@questcharter.org
District Name: Wake County District Name: Wake County District Name: District	District Phon	e: <u>(919) 841-0</u>	<u>441</u>	
I have reviewed the information - Eligibility Certification), and c				ity requirements on page 2 (Part las accurate.
			,	Date
(Superintendent's Signature)				
Name of School Board Presiden	t/Chairperso	on: Mrs. Miche	lle Carll	
I have reviewed the information - Eligibility Certification), and c				ity requirements on page 2 (Part lais accurate.
				Date
(School Board President's/Chair	person's Sig	gnature)		

The original signed cover sheet only should be converted to a PDF file and emailed to Aba Kumi, Blue Ribbon Schools Project Manager (aba.kumi@ed.gov) or mailed by expedited mail or a courier mail service (such as Express Mail, FedEx or UPS) to Aba Kumi, Director, Blue Ribbon Schools Program, Office of Communications and Outreach, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Ave., SW, Room 5E103, Washington, DC 20202-8173.

^{*}Private Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, write N/A in the space.

The signatures on the first page of this application certify that each of the statements below concerning the school's eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (OCR) requirements is true and correct.

- 1. The school has some configuration that includes one or more of grades K-12. (Schools on the same campus with one principal, even K-12 schools, must apply as an entire school.)
- 2. The school has made adequate yearly progress each year for the past two years and has not been identified by the state as "persistently dangerous" within the last two years.
- 3. To meet final eligibility, the school must meet the state's Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) requirement in the 2010-2011 school year. AYP must be certified by the state and all appeals resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.
- 4. If the school includes grades 7 or higher, the school must have foreign language as a part of its curriculum and a significant number of students in grades 7 and higher must take the course.
- 5. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2005.
- 6. The nominated school has not received the Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009 or 2010.
- 7. The nominated school or district is not refusing OCR access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
- 8. OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.
- 9. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school or the school district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution's equal protection clause.
- 10. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

All data are the most recent year available.

DISTRICT

1. Number of schools in the district:	1	Elementary schools
(per district designation)	0	Middle/Junior high schools
_	0	High schools
_	0	K-12 schools
_	1	Total schools in district
2. District per-pupil expenditure:	2100	
SCHOOL (To be completed by all s	schools)	
3. Category that best describes the aris located:	rea whe	re the school Suburban with characteristics typical of an urban area

4. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 11

5. Number of students as of October 1, 2010 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total			# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	0	0	0		6	7	9	16
K	9	7	16		7	4	13	17
1	8	9	17		8	5	9	14
2	4	12	16		9	0	0	0
3	8	7	15		10	0	0	0
4	5	11	16		11	0	0	0
5	6	10	16		12	0	0	0
Total in Applying School:							143	

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the school	0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
	4 % Asian
	4 % Black or African American
	0 % Hispanic or Latino
	0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
	89 % White
	3 % Two or more races
	100 % Total
•	

Only the seven standard categories should be used in reporting the racial/ethnic composition of your school. The final Guidance on Maintaining, Collecting, and Reporting Racial and Ethnic data to the U.S. Department of Education published in the October 19, 2007 *Federal Register* provides definitions for each of the seven categories.

7. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2009-2010 school year: 1% This rate is calculated using the grid below. The answer to (6) is the mobility rate.

(1)	Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2009 until the end of the school year.	0
(2)	Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2009 until the end of the school year.	1
(3)	Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)].	1
(4)	Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2009	143
(5)	Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4).	0.01
(6)	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100.	1

8. Percent limited English proficient students in the school:	0%
Total number of limited English proficient students in the school:	0
Number of languages represented, not including English:	0
Specify languages:	

	NC8

9.	Percent of stude	nts eligible for free/reduced-prio	ced meals:	0%
	Total number of	students who qualify:	-	0
	income families	, or the school does not participa	mate of the percentage of students from low- ate in the free and reduced-priced school meals in how the school calculated this estimate.	
10	Percent of stude	nts receiving special education s	services:	10%
	Total number of	students served:		15
			bilities according to conditions designated in Do not add additional categories.	
	0	Autism	Orthopedic Impairment	
	0	Deafness	4 Other Health Impaired	
	0	Deaf-Blindness	6 Specific Learning Disability	
	0	Emotional Disturbance	5 Speech or Language Impairment	
	0	Hearing Impairment	Traumatic Brain Injury	
	0	Mental Retardation	O Visual Impairment Including Blindness	
	0	Multiple Disabilities	0 Developmentally Delayed	

11. Indicate number of full-time and part-time staff members in each of the categories below:

Number of Staff

	Full-Time	Part-Time
Administrator(s)	1	0
Classroom teachers	9	0
Special resource teachers/specialists	1	3
Paraprofessionals	0	0
Support staff	1	1
Total number	12	4

12. Average school student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the Full Time Equivalent of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1:

16:1

13. Show the attendance patterns of teachers and students as a percentage. Only high schools need to supply graduation rates. Briefly explain in the Notes section any student or teacher attendance rates under 95% and teacher turnover rates over 12% and fluctuations in graduation rates.

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Daily student attendance	98%	98%	98%	98%	98%
Daily teacher attendance	99%	99%	99%	99%	99%
Teacher turnover rate	6%	13%	6%	0%	0%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

If these data are not available, explain and provide reasonable estimates.

Please note that the percentages seem high due to our small staff size. In 2007-2008 a new teacher was hired due to a teacher retiring. In 2008-2009, two teachers were hired because a teacher had a baby and another teacher left teaching to be with her children. In 2009-2010, a teacher was hired because a teacher had a baby. Quest has not had any teachers leave in order to work for another school.

14. For schools ending in grade 12 (high schools): Show what the students who graduated in Spring 2010 are doing as of Fall 2010.

Graduating class size:	
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	%
Enrolled in a community college	 %
Enrolled in vocational training	 %
Found employment	 %
Military service	 %
Other	 %
Total	0 %

Quest Academy, a charter school for grades K through 8, has been named a "School of Excellence" each year of its operation and is ranked among the best in North Carolina for academic achievement. It is among the few schools in North Carolina to receive a distinguished Great Schools Rating of 10 out of 10. Our program emphasizes sound character along with scholarship and creativity in both academics and the arts. The Quest community values the individuality of each child and encourages each to strive for personal excellence.

Quest Academy evolved from a private school known as the Helen Paesler School. In 1993, the Helen Paesler School opened to accommodate the rigorous training schedule of the gymnasts participating in the Gymcarolina competitive team program. The goal was to provide a high quality education that would be flexible enough to accommodate the demands placed on these children in pursuit of their chosen interests. Through a shortened, more intensive school day and year-round academic schedule, the Helen Paesler School sought to accomplish its goal. The Helen Paesler School became Quest Academy in 1999, continuing the mission of providing a quality, accelerated academic program for motivated students who are pursing high intensity training outside the classroom. The students may be involved in athletic participation or performances in the arts.

Much of Quest's success correlates with the high quality of teachers working with our students. Each teacher at Quest Academy is licensed, highly qualified by federal definition, half are National Board certified, and three have, or are working on a master's degree. All teach in their area of certification.

Another reason for success is the student-teacher ratio of 16:1 which allows teachers the freedom to design their teaching strategies so as to respond to each student's needs, therefore providing the opportunity for every student to study and achieve at or above his or her grade level. This small class size allows optimal learning for all students because teachers are able to differentiate instruction based on individual needs. Students learn to work effectively in group and individual settings, and learning experiences between various grade levels/students are encouraged. As a result, Quest Academy students consistently demonstrate, through State Testing and in the classroom assessments, their ability to maintain the highest academic standards while simultaneously committing themselves to excellence in their chosen activities.

Many opportunities exist to build and nurture sound character, one part of our school's goals. Our kindergarten and eighth graders enjoy a buddies program where relationships are nurtured and good citizenship is modeled. A school-wide coin drive was held by the fourth grade to raise money for housing a family in Haiti after the 2009 earthquake.

Senior citizens at a nearby retirement center benefit from handmade gifts and caroling by sixth, seventh and eighth graders. Eighth graders also volunteer at our area's Food Bank. Evidence that we at Quest are meeting our mission of scholarship and creativity in both the academics and the arts can be seen in the students who have exhibited strong character along with success in both these areas. A current fifth grade student's academic lessons are being monitored as she performs on stage in Los Angeles for six weeks; a former student is participating in Olympic figure skating while maintaining academic excellence; there graduates are now attending universities on full gymnastics scholarships and others will be next year. There are many more success stories like these throughout Quest Academy's history.

Quest Academy is worthy of Blue Ribbon status for numerous reasons. Our students consistently outperform other schools in all areas of state testing. Former students and parents frequently return to tell us how prepared Quest made them for high school, college and beyond. Our students are making marks on the academic world as well as in athletics, performing arts, and the community. Lastly, our teacher commitment to professional development on an individual and school wide level is unparalleled. The commendable work ethic and the desire for excellence of all involved at Quest truly make it an outstanding school.

1. Assessment Results:

Our data tables summarize our students' scores on North Carolina End of Grade (EOG) Tests in Mathematics and Reading for the past five years. For our entire school, and each grade 3 – 8, percents of students considered proficient (Level III or above) and percent of students considered Advanced (Level IV) are shown. Over the past few years, we have studied trends in this data to help us make instructional decisions at Quest.

All of our students in grades 3 through 8, including our special education children, for the last five years were proficient (Level III or above) on the NC EOGs in both reading and math. Therefore, when studying the data for trends, we were particularly interested in the percent of children earning the Advanced (Level IV) level. We looked at our overall scores in mathematics and reading, as well as our scores for our exceptional children. We also chose to look at how specific classes performed over the years. For instance, we looked at the percent of 3rd graders achieving Advanced in 2005 – 2006, and then followed their percentages as they moved to the next grade level each year.

There are not many significant trends in our math scores across the five years. First, all of our students scored Proficient on the Mathematics EOGs each year. Also, since we are such a small school (approximately 86 children testing each year), the differences in the percentage of students scoring the Advanced level, between 85% and 90%, is statistically insignificant, and really calculates to about 1 student change per year.

Regarding our special education students, all were proficient all five years. Comparing percentages of special education reaching Advanced level is awkward due to our small size, but 75% of our exceptional education students reached the Advanced levels during the 2009-2010 testing session. This is smaller than the school-wide percentage, 88% of whom reached the Advanced level, but in actual numbers this only refers to two students. That is a strong point of our school, that we can individualize instructional strategies for those two students in order to help them achieve Advanced level on the Mathematics EOG next year.

Our percentage of students scoring Advanced on the Reading EOGs for the last five years is smaller than our mathematics scores. (However, all students, including special education students scored proficient on the tests.) One reason for the lower percentage of students earning the Advanced level was that a revised version of the test was given 2007-2008. However, the lower scores prompted us to make some changes in our reading programs, and we began planning and executing a school wide staff development program on instructional strategies for improving reading comprehension.

In following classes of students over a few years, one trend seen was a drop off in the percentage of students reaching Advanced level in Reading between 7th and 8th grade. This forced us to take a hard look at the expectations we had for our 8th graders. The data itself does not suggest specific weaknesses, but classroom observations have helped our 8th grade team to focus more on instructional strategies for making inferences, understanding the author's purpose, and interpreting poetry.

All of our special education students were proficient on the Reading EOG in 2009-2010, but only 50% scored at the Advanced level. However, in actual numbers this is four students who are working closely with teachers and families to increase their chances of earning an Advanced level on this years end of grade tests.

For EOG tests, a raw score (the number of questions a child answers correctly) is converted to a developmental scale score. This score allows for comparison of a student's score from one year to the

next. Achievement levels (Level I, II, III and IV) are predetermined performance standards that allow us to compare a student's performance to grade level expectations. In general, students performing at Level III are considered to be proficient, and have consistently demonstrated mastery of grade-level subject matter and skills and are well-prepared for the next grade level. Students earning a Level IV are considered to exceed expectations, or advanced, and have performed in a superior manner clearly beyond that required to be proficient.

This link http://www.ncpublicschools.org/docs/accountability/testing/eog/rangeseogmath.pdf shows the achievement level ranges for mathematics tests for the last five years. This link http://www.ncpublicschools.org/docs/accountability/testing/achievelevels/alrangesreading.pdf shows the achievement level ranges for reading tests since the new test in 2007-2008.

This (http://www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/educators/eog) links to a general page of information about both Mathematics and Reading EOGs.

Overall, all of our students are considered to be proficient (100% earning Level III over the last five years), and a large percentage are advanced. However, it is clear to Quest Academy from our data, that there is always room for improvement. Our small size and commitment to our students allows us to use this assessment information to make decisions on a regular basis to improve the education of our students.

2. Using Assessment Results:

Using assessment data to analyze and improve student performance is a cornerstone of our educational program at Quest Academy. Since we are a small school, we can use state testing, as well as our own inhouse formative and summative assessments to make both school-wide decisions and choices for individual students.

One example of how assessment data used systematically in decision making processes to improve teaching and learning involved our reading End of Grade scores for the last five years. According to the bar set by the state of North Carolina, all of our students were proficient readers. However, we saw slowed growth or a decline in some of our students' scores, especially after the state revised the test in 2007-2008. We then gave our own reading assessments to gain further insight into the strengths and weaknesses in our students. It became clear that our students were fluent readers, with most reading at or above grade level, but not comprehending above grade level works. Therefore, as a school, we planned and executed professional development to improve our instructional strategies for teaching reading comprehension, not just reading fluency.

This is an on-going process, as we pretest, benchmark test and post-test our students in reading comprehension. After the benchmark this year, it was clear comprehending poetry is a student weakness, and plans are in place to create new learning opportunities for teachers (and therefore students) in this area.

We also utilize ClassScape, a North Carolina based program, in order to use assessment data on a regular, almost daily basis. ClassScape is an online classroom assessment system that facilitates learning by focusing on curricular objectives. ClassScape enables teachers to monitor student performance on *North Carolina Standard Course of Study* academic indicators. The system also allows North Carolina teachers to build customized tests or use tests prepared by ClassScape. ClassScape assists teachers in self-assessment of instructional strategies and monitoring student progress on an ongoing basis. Teachers can select specific objectives to assess throughout the school year and access real-time instructional feedback reports. Teachers use this information to tailor instruction for individual students.

3. Communicating Assessment Results:

It is important to Quest to communicate student performance data to parents and students on a regular basis, not just after end of year assessments. To this end, Quest Academy has many procedures in place to be sure students and parents are aware of their performance. Also, when sending home state testing information at the end of the year, we include language and information to help parents understand the results.

Conferencing with students and parents is one way Quest Academy shares student performance information. Quest teacher's conference before and after school frequently. Conferences occur after quarterly interim reports, or whenever a teacher, student or parent requests one. Conferences are held using data, such as classroom work samples, test scores and anecdotal evidence, so teachers can share an overall view of a child with his or her parent(s).

Teachers also stay in contact with parents in other ways, both formal and informal. Technology allows teachers to be in contact with personal emails and/or class newsletters, detailing what is happening in the classroom. Daily folders allow parents to know about academic accomplishments and struggles or behavioral issues or improvements that arise as they happen. Open Houses, twice a year, also allow for face-to-face contact between parents and teachers.

At the end of year, students and parents receive a formal letter explaining their End-of-Grade scores and all parents are invited to come in and discuss questions, issues or concerns.

4. Sharing Lessons Learned:

Quest shares successful strategies with other schools in the area or state on a regular basis. We have established close relationships with neighboring charter schools. For example, a workshop on teaching reading in the content areas was held with Magellan Charter School, and our teachers were able to share successful reading strategies. Teachers also actively participate in content workshops across the state and share techniques, ideas and lesson plans. For example, while attending a statewide, scientifically based reading workshop, our primary teachers shared innovative strategies that motivated our struggling readers. Many of our teachers also blog about and post their effective lesson plans online at websites like LessonPlanet.

Our willingness to share has led other schools to contact us directly for advice, ideas and support. Our principal talks to various administrators around the state regularly about Quest's success and what strategies are in place to continue that success. Our Exceptional Children's teacher frequently speaks with colleagues in the area about our strong program and how we help our special needs students succeed. Our willingness to share our ideas has allowed other schools to implement positive changes in their schools as well.

1. Curriculum:

Quest Academy Charter School aligns its curriculum with the newly adopted Common Core State Standards as well as the North Carolina Standard Course of Study. The students at Quest receive instruction in all core areas- reading, writing, mathematics, science, and social studies in self-contained classrooms. Due to an uninterrupted school day (i.e.-no pull out for special classes), the curriculum being presented dictates the schedule of our school day; Therefore, depending on the momentum of a particular lesson, the time spent can be extended without the pressure of time-constraints. Content is explicitly taught while employing multiple instructional delivery methods.

The Language Arts curriculum at Quest Academy is based on the North Carolina Standard Course of Study and then adapted and customized to meet the unique requirements of our students. It is a spiraling framework that views language arts skills as those that fully develop over time. Three key components studied school wide include language conventions, language discipline (setting, plot, etc.) and various genres. In addition, the primary grades stress the importance of foundation skills (phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension), whereas intermediate grades emphasize deeper understanding of written text.

In mathematics, Quest Academy follows The North Carolina Standard Course of Study which is organized into five primary strands encompassing kindergarten through eighth grade; they are Numbers and Operations, Geometry, Data Analysis and Probability, Algebra, and Measurement. The curriculum is presented via physical representations to develop understanding of abstract concepts. Frequent use of manipulatives, hands-on activities, and technology engage all students regardless of learning style, preference and current performance level.

The goal of the science curriculum at Quest Academy is for all students to achieve scientific literacy. Following the North Carolina Standard Course of Study, unifying concepts for all students K-8 include Systems, Order and Organization, Evidence, Models and Explanation, Constancy, Change, and Measurement, Evolution and Equilibrium, and lastly, Form and Function. To ensure interest and motivation, science instruction is presented primarily through experiments related to the curriculum, community resources (i.e. guest speakers, museums), and field trips. Textbooks and consumables are also used to supplement the curriculum when needed.

The Social Studies curriculum at Quest integrates social sciences and humanities to develop civic-minded, informed, and responsible citizens. Primary disciplines studied include history, geography, economics, political science, anthropology, psychology, and sociology all through developmentally appropriate methods. Students are continually engaged in solving meaningful problems and encouraged to question one another, thus enabling students to take a greater responsibility for their own learning, while developing decision making skills, and self-efficacy.

Each grade is given the opportunity to enrich their standard course of study by integrating performing and visual arts activities throughout their core subjects. Primary grades study different artists (Van Gogh, Mondrian, Lawrence, and Ramos) representing many cultures. Our upper grades create short plays and visual representations of historical events. Quest teachers are encouraged to utilize the resources in the community in order to enhance their student's fine arts curriculum. For example, primary grades attend various productions at our local theaters or tour historical sites in our capital. Upper grades have the opportunity to visit art museums when special opportunities arise, such as the Titanic, Money, and Norman Rockwell exhibits. The Upper grades also plan overnight field trips to Williamsburg, VA, Charleston, SC, and Washington, DC to reinforce the art curriculum.

Quest Academy has the unique opportunity to showcase our own students' talents. Our Irish dancers, musicians, and gymnasts have been able to entertain our students and staff.

The healthful living standard course of study directly relates to teaching skills to enhance a person's quality of life. In order for Quest to ensure those needs are met, we provide students with daily opportunities to grow. Every third-fifth grade student participates in the Presidential Fitness Test and tries to beat their personal best. On a daily basis, our students are taught to research game rules, teamwork and good sportsmanship. Quest teachers combine direct instruction, role playing, and modeling when introducing new physical activities.

During integrated instruction, students' health and nutrition goals are addressed. In the primary grades diet and making good food choices are taught and modeled every day. By the fourth grade, these concepts are taught with culminating activities in the nutrition unit. In science, the upper grades learn about health issues through direct instruction and middle school students participate in the 'Facts of Life' seminar at Poe Health Center in Raleigh.

2. Reading/English:

Quest Academy Charter school's reading curriculum aligns with the North Carolina Standard Course of Study and is presented via innovative teaching strategies. Quest employs a research-based core reading program focusing strongly on foundation skills such as those recommended by National Reading Panel's key areas: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. Supplementary resources to fill gaps and intensive interventions are also used as the need arises. The reading curriculum is examined, dissected, and adjusted annually to ensure school-wide cohesion and well-prepared, informed teachers.

The primary grades employ a combination of guided reading, basal texts, and computer based reading programs. The intermediate grades transition into novel studies, often linked to social studies topics, with an emphasis placed on making deeper connections within the texts. Small group instruction is completed with students in need of additional support. This approach allows us to effectively individualize instruction, take learning style preferences into consideration, and follow a progressive, logical school wide plan.

Students acquire foundational reading skills through explicit instruction in a highly structured setting. Material is presented in a logical order and delivered in a myriad of ways including, but not limited to, whole group instruction, flexible small group instruction, and one on one instruction. Reading behaviors are modeled daily and integrated throughout all core subjects. Frequent communications with parents, including activities they can implement at home, strengthen the acquisition and retention of new concepts.

Due to frequent formative assessment, students performing below grade level are quickly identified. Strategies found to be successful in improving reading skills in the early primary grades incorporate the inclusion of assistive technology, before/after school "reading clubs", increasing the amount of high-interest/low readability texts, allowing students blocks of time to read independently during SSR (Sustained Silent Reading) and conducting learning style inventories. Modeling how to identify relevant content, summarizing and paraphrasing texts into their own words, and re-reading text several times for deeper understanding have proven successful in improving reading skills in the upper grades.

3. Mathematics:

The mathematics curriculum at Quest Academy focuses on the skills and knowledge necessary for students to master the requirements of the North Carolina Standard Course of Study and beyond. This standard course of study is organized into five strands integrated throughout K - 8: Number Sense and Operations, Measurement, Geometry and Spatial Sense, Data Analysis and Probability, and Patterning and Algebra. The goal of our mathematics instruction is to produce learners who excel in their

comprehension of concepts and relationships in mathematics, as well as become proficient in the application of those concepts as they pertain to the real world. Quest Academy's mathematics curriculum is also aligned with the Common Core State Standards, which have been designed to prepare students for future success in college and career choices.

One major facet of the mathematics curriculum at Quest Academy is mathematical modeling. This is an important technique used to build an understanding of abstract ideas in the realm of math. Students at all grade levels work with manipulatives to assist them as they gain number sense, utilize geometric shapes and pattern blocks to facilitate the development of spatial reasoning, and collect and display data relevant to their daily lives to determine measures of center and correlations. This has a direct link to the development of real world problem-solving skills in mathematics as a major objective school wide. This problem-centered approach to learning mathematics enables our students to take greater responsibility for and pride in their own learning as well as develop essential communication and decision-making skills.

The unique learning atmosphere at Quest Academy and small class size allows for individualized attention in mathematics. Students requiring extra help or fostered guidance to achieve success in a mathematical concept are easily identified and quickly tutored in numerous ways. To encourage students to work up to their potential teachers provide one-on-one instruction before school, throughout the school day, and after school. Teachers also make use of areas outside our contained classrooms to focus instruction on separate small groups. Peer tutors across grade levels provide students with the extra help and confidence they need to achieve in mathematics as well as boosting the sense of community and camaraderie amongst the Quest family.

4. Additional Curriculum Area:

Technology is an essential curriculum area at Quest Academy. The use of technology is incorporated into the academic program as a tool offering unlimited possibilities for students and teachers. However, in order for students to leave Quest Academy with all of the requisite technology skills and computer literacy, students need real training and education in both physical components of computers and the issues that arise with their use in a technology based society.

We have goals for our students across all grade levels. They include knowledge of various computer technologies and the ethical responsibilities inherent in using technology. By eighth grade, students learn, use and master programs that include: word processing, spreadsheet, database, and multimedia presentation. Our students also use the Internet to research, collaborate and interact with peers, experts and other audiences. The main goal in the use of the Internet or any computer program is for students to learn to use technology to solve problems and make informed decisions.

However, we believe Quest Academy easily surpasses our state's Standard Course of Study due to our commitment to technology and the resources available to us. Quest Academy allows each student to work toward our goals with the use of state of the art wireless technology. Students are trained on individual laptops with network/internet connections, and begin keyboarding practice in first grade! Our mobile laptop lab also allows for the integration of technology into real world applications while in the classroom. Therefore, computers are not just a curriculum in itself; they are used to enhance and elaborate on our entire curriculum areas, from reading and math to science and social studies. Programs that help teachers expand on instructional strategies include: *BrainPop*, an online program that shows educational movies and ancillary material to explain concepts in a voice and visual style accessible and entertaining to students, *Classscape*, a North Carolina standards based formative assessment online program, and early education software, such as *JumpStart* and *A to Z Dictionary*. These are just a small part of software and online materials available for use every day because of access to classroom sets of laptops.

Finally, technology furthers our mission of serving motivated students pursuing high intensity training outside of the classroom. On a yearly basis, we have students who miss school for long-term training or performances outside of the classroom. For example, this year we are sending assignments and feedback to a student performing in Los Angeles, through use of scanners, laptops and wireless technologies. All of

this is possible because of Quest's commitment to using technology in order to better our students and make them future-ready.

5. Instructional Methods:

It is part of the mission of Quest Academy to meet the diverse needs of our students. Our small size and instructional strategies allow differentiating instruction not just for subgroups, but for every individual student in the school.

Quest Academy uses formative assessment on a regular basis to help differentiate instruction and meet our students' diverse needs. Formative assessment is a process used by students and teachers during instruction to provide instant feedback. The feedback allows both students and teachers to adjust their learning or teaching in order to help the students improve their mastery of our intended instructional outcomes. The main advantage of formative assessment is that it happens during the learning process, not at the end. In this way, teachers are able to address misconceptions as they occur, instead of after a large summative unit test. Also, our teachers view formative assessment as a partnership between students and teachers. It is important for the students to be engaged in their learning by participating in formative assessment. We hope students at Quest Academy can help answer the questions of "Where am I going?", "What do I know?" and "What do I do to close the gap?" as they assess their own learning.

Examples of tools Quest teachers use to formatively assess students on a daily basis include: individual white boards students can show answers to each other or the teacher, ClassScape (a computer program in reading and math used to chart goals and objectives achieved), journals and writing for understanding assignments, online assignments such as Brain Pop, peer editing, reading buddies, math clubs, and one-to-one instruction before/after school.

Depending on assessed needs of the individual child, instruction is adjusted on a daily basis. For example, grades K-2 have reading groups and spelling words based on individual needs. Grades 3-8 read novels and use books on tape to meet individual needs and learning styles. First graders use "Speed Math" and second and third graders use "Rocket Math", programs to develop basic math skills at each child's own pace. Every student's progress is assessed individually. Quest teachers use a variety of teaching methods such as hands on experiments, small and whole group work, and adjust to each students own learning style to meet their needs.

Students at Quest Academy are placed in the appropriate grade based on their individual needs. Lesson plans are given in advance for students who will be absent due to travel and performance schedules. Students are also given differentiated assignments. For example, a student who was in Canada for an ice hockey tournament wrote an essay on life with a Canadian family, in lieu of a social studies assignment. All of these are examples that show how our small size and focus on individual students allow us to help all children reach their potential.

6. Professional Development:

Quest Academy's exceptional professional development programs have had major impacts on student achievement. Our philosophy of professional development is to cater to the individual needs of our students based on frequent assessments. Due to the low student-teacher ratio of 16:1 and strong teacher commitment, we are able to tailor our school's professional development program exactly to what teachers see as students' needs. Our faculty annually evaluates what has been diagnosed as weaknesses in either our students or in our abilities to support their learning. Then we plan, prepare, and execute professional development based on our collective decisions. Professional development opportunities are then sought out by individual teachers to further their grade level's achievement. These may include attending workshops or taking advantage of online courses. When collaborative assessment indicates a school wide need, our staff participates in an entire school-based professional development programs.

An important example of a school-wide professional development effort is our Ouest Academy writing curriculum. Although not all schools place an emphasis on writing, our staff feels it is a skill critical for future success. Because of this, all of Quest's teachers participated in the formation of our comprehensive writing curriculum. Taking our knowledge from the book Writing Essentials by Reggie Routman and our North Carolina Standard Course of Study objectives, we wrote a curriculum that includes grades kindergarten through eighth. Some of the practical information we applied from the research was how to make writing more purposeful and enjoyable for teachers and students, raise expectations of our students, implement shared writing, and conduct conferences with students. This curriculum involves grammar in addition to writing. Beginning in kindergarten the curriculum involves the basics of writing left-to-right and top-to-bottom while using temporary and conventional spelling. By the time our students are in 8th grade, they are proficient in expository and argumentative writing and writing research papers. Every student at Quest takes at least two writing tests each year that are evaluated as part of our formative assessment. Individual conferences with students then guide their development. These assessments follow the students through each grade in individual portfolios, thus assisting teachers in continuing the writing curriculum. This is only one example of how our school's professional development activities support student learning and how it aligns with academic standards. Each grade is a stepping stone to the next, and our teachers have concrete evidence of what has been done so there will be no learning gaps as each child moves forward.

7. School Leadership:

It is my belief as principal of Quest Academy that I must work collaboratively with all stake holders including educators, students, and parents to develop a vision that will effectively accomplish the mission of our school. Once established, the goals defined in our mission will generally remain constant while the process for reaching our goals will adjust based on need. It is also my belief that effective leadership is more about developing people than programs.

Through the years of working with public schools, I have realized that my leadership philosophy could rest on four principles. The first is the fact my leadership includes surrounding myself with highly qualified people that have the professional and personal characteristics to accomplish the assigned tasks. It is vital that each member of the team has the professional characteristics that match the needs of the particular assignment. It is also just as important to have team members with personal characteristics that will allow for individual success as well as team success. The second principle is to provide a positive work environment that promotes creativity and an atmosphere of support and care. Team members need to be comfortable with trying new ideas that may or may not be successful without fear of failure. Only in this environment are new ideas created and new methods developed to reach the goals of the class. The third principle is the importance of providing necessary tools to do the job. Regardless of ability, success can't be achieved without the appropriate tools at hand. My role as principal is to make sure every teacher has what they need to be successful, sometimes requiring ingenuity and thinking outof-the-box to accomplish. The fourth and most important principle is the recognition that administration must get out of the teacher's way. Give them the space to create, to design, and to carry out the program of instruction they feel does the very best at reaching their goals while knowing I'm available for help and support.

I firmly believe that no particular position in our school is any more important than another, including mine. The only difference is in job description. We each have our responsibilities and we must embrace those responsibilities to create a seamless program of instruction for our student's present and future success.

PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics Grade: 3 Test: End of Grade

Edition/Publication Year: Publisher: North Carolina Department of Public

2010/2009/2008/2007/2006 Instruction

07/2008/2007/2000	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	May	May	May	May	May
SCHOOL SCORES	iviay	iviay	Way	iviay	Iviay
Level III	100	100	100	100	100
Level IV	100	100	94	93	100
Number of students tested	15	14	16	15	15
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	100	100	100	100	100
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
SUBGROUP SCORES					
	amia Dicade	ontogod Ctu	donta		
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-econ	omic Disady	antagea Stu	aents		
Level III					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
2. African American Students					
Level III					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Level III					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Level III					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Level III					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Level III					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					

Subject: Reading Grade: 3 Test: End of Grade

Edition/Publication Year: Publisher: North Carolina Department of Public

2010/2009/2008/2007/2006 Instruction

09/2008/2007/2006	Ins	struction			
	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	May	May	May	May	May
SCHOOL SCORES					
Level III	100	100	100	100	100
Level IV	80	100	69	100	100
Number of students tested	15	14	16	15	15
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-econ	omic Disadv	antaged Stu	dents		
Level III					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
2. African American Students					
Level III					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Level III					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Level III					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Level III					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Level III					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					

Subject: Mathematics Grade: 4 Test: End of Grade

Edition/Publication Year: Publisher: North Carolina Department of Public

2010/2009/2008/2007/2006 Instruction

J9/2008/2007/2006	1118	struction			
	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	May	May	May	May	May
SCHOOL SCORES					
Level III	100	100	100	100	100
Level IV	86	67	86	87	73
Number of students tested	14	15	14	15	15
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-econ	omic Disadv	antaged Stu	dents		
Level III					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
2. African American Students					<u>-</u>
Level III					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Level III					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Level III					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Level III					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Level III					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					

Subject: Reading Grade: 4 Test: End of Grade

Edition/Publication Year: Publisher: North Carolina Department of Public

2010/2009/2008/2007/2006 Instruction

J9120081200112000	1113	struction			
	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	May	May	May	May	May
SCHOOL SCORES					
Level III	100	100	100	100	100
Level IV	79	27	50	100	93
Number of students tested	14	15	14	15	15
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-econ	omic Disadv	antaged Stu	dents		
Level III					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
2. African American Students					
Level III					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Level III					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Level III					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Level III					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Level III					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					

Subject: Mathematics Grade: 5 Test: End of Grade

Edition/Publication Year: Publisher: North Carolina Department of Public

2010/2009/2008/2007/2006 Instruction

09/2008/2007/2006	Ins	struction			
	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	May	May	May	May	May
SCHOOL SCORES					
Level III	100	100	100	100	100
Level IV	80	73	93	79	87
Number of students tested	15	15	15	14	15
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-econ	omic Disadv	antaged Stu	dents		
Level III					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
2. African American Students					
Level III					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Level III					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Level III					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Level III					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Level III					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					

Subject: Reading Grade: 5 Test: End of Grade

Edition/Publication Year: Publisher: North Carolina Department of Public

2010/2009/2008/2007/2006 Instruction

09/2008/200//2006	1113	struction			
	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	May	May	May	May	May
SCHOOL SCORES					
Level III	100	100	100	100	100
Level IV	73	60	53	100	100
Number of students tested	15	15	15	14	15
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-econ	omic Disadv	antaged Stu	dents		
Level III					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
2. African American Students			<u>-</u>		
Level III					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Level III					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Level III					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Level III					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Level III					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					

Subject: Mathematics Grade: 6 Test: End of Grade

Edition/Publication Year: Publisher: North Carolina Department of Public

2010/2009/2008/2007/2006 Instruction

09/2008/2007/2000	1110	diuction			
	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	May	May	May	May	May
SCHOOL SCORES					
Level III	100	100	100	100	100
Level IV	79	100	87	87	100
Number of students tested	14	15	14	14	15
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-econ	omic Disadv	antaged Stu	dents		
Level III					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
2. African American Students					
Level III					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Level III					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Level III					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students			<u> </u>		·
Level III					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Level III					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					

Subject: Reading Grade: 6 Test: End of Grade

Edition/Publication Year: Publisher: North Carolina Department of Public

2010/2009/2008/2007/2006 Instruction

J9/2008/2007/2006	1118	struction			
	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	May	May	May	May	May
SCHOOL SCORES					
Level III	100	100	100	100	100
Level IV	79	100	87	87	79
Number of students tested	14	15	15	15	14
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-econ	omic Disadv	antaged Stu	dents		
Level III					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
2. African American Students					<u>-</u>
Level III					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Level III					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Level III					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students				<u> </u>	<u>-</u>
Level III					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Level III					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					

Subject: Mathematics Grade: 7 Test: End of Grade

Edition/Publication Year: 2010/2009/2008/2007/2006 Publisher: North Carolina Department of Public

09/2008/2007/2006 Instruction							
	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006		
Testing Month	May	May	May	May	May		
SCHOOL SCORES							
Level III	100	100	100	100	100		
Level IV	92	77	80	77	100		
Number of students tested	13	13	15	13	13		
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100		
Number of students alternatively assessed							
Percent of students alternatively assessed							
SUBGROUP SCORES							
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-econ	omic Disadv	antaged Stu	dents				
Level III							
Level IV							
Number of students tested							
2. African American Students							
Level III							
Level IV							
Number of students tested							
3. Hispanic or Latino Students							
Level III							
Level IV							
Number of students tested							
4. Special Education Students							
Level III							
Level IV							
Number of students tested							
5. English Language Learner Students							
Level III							
Level IV							
Number of students tested							
6.							
Level III							
Level IV							
Number of students tested							
NOTES:							

Subject: Reading Grade: 7 Test: End of Grade

Edition/Publication Year: Publisher: North Carolina Department of Public

2010/2009/2008/2007/2006 Instruction

J9120081200112000	1110	struction			
	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	May	May	May	May	May
SCHOOL SCORES					
Level III	100	100	100	100	100
Level IV	54	54	100	92	92
Number of students tested	13	13	15	13	13
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-econ	omic Disadv	antaged Stu	dents		
Level III					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
2. African American Students					
Level III					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Level III					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Level III					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					-
Level III					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Level III					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					

Subject: Mathematics Grade: 8 Test: End of Grade

Edition/Publication Year: Publisher: North Carolina Department of Public

2010/2009/2008/2007/2006 Instruction

J9120081200112000	1110	struction			
	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	May	May	May	May	May
SCHOOL SCORES					
Level III	100	100	100	100	100
Level IV	92	100	92	87	79
Number of students tested	13	14	12	15	14
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-econ	omic Disadv	antaged Stu	dents		
Level III					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
2. African American Students					
Level III					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Level III					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Level III					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Level III					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Level III					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					

Subject: Reading Grade: 8 Test: End of Grade

Edition/Publication Year: Publisher: North Carolina Department of Public

2010/2009/2008/2007/2006 Instruction

J9120081200112000	1110	struction			
	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	May	May	May	May	May
SCHOOL SCORES					
Level III	100	100	100	100	100
Level IV	77	64	42	80	79
Number of students tested	13	14	12	15	14
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-econ	omic Disadv	antaged Stu	dents		
Level III					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
2. African American Students					
Level III					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Level III					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Level III					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Level III					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Level III					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					

Subject: Mathematics Grade: School Average

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	May	May	May	May	May
SCHOOL SCORES					
Level III	100	100	100	100	100
Level IV	88	86	89	85	90
Number of students tested	84	86	87	87	86
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-econ	omic Disadv	antaged Stu	dents		
Level III					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
2. African American Students					
Level III					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Level III					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Level III	100	100	100	100	100
Level IV	75	71	67	78	75
Number of students tested	8	7	9	9	8
5. English Language Learner Students					
Level III					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Level III					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					

Subject: Reading Grade: School Average

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	May	May	May	May	May
SCHOOL SCORES					
Level III	100	100	100	100	100
Level IV	70	65	66	93	91
Number of students tested	84	86	87	87	86
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-econ	omic Disadv	antaged Stu	dents		
Level III					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
2. African American Students					
Level III					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Level III					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Level III	100	100	100	100	100
Level IV	50	43	44	100	75
Number of students tested	8	7	9	9	8
5. English Language Learner Students					
Level III					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
6.					
Level III					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					